

Joint Legislative Public Assistance Commission

**Report to the
1997 General Assembly of North Carolina
1998 Regular Session**

May 11, 1998

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
RALEIGH 27603



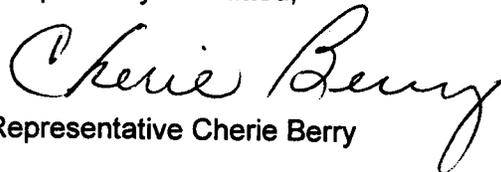
To the honorable Harold Brubaker, Speaker of the House of Representatives; and the Honorable Marc Basnight, President Pro Tempore of the Senate; and the Members of the 1997 General Assembly (Regular Session 1998):

The Joint Legislative Public Assistance Commission submits for your consideration the following bills pursuant to Part XII of S.L. 1997-443 (S 352).

The 1997 Regular Session established the Joint Legislative Public Assistance Commission (JLPAC) with a membership of ten House and ten Senate members to monitor implementation and make any necessary recommendations to the General Assembly regarding any further changes to law or rule. The Joint Legislative Public Assistance Commission was also charged with receiving a number of reports with regard to welfare reform.

The JLPAC met September 29, 1997, October 28, 1997, December 3, 1997, January 14, 1998, March 2, 1998, March 23, 1998, and May 18, 1998. Much debate centered around the intent of the legislation; the JLPAC gave direction to the Department of Health and Human Services regarding this intent. The subject of Biometric Imaging was discussed at almost every meeting as this is a key piece of the legislation establishing a method for accurately tracking recipients of any public assistance. A number of other topics were discussed concerning changes that needed to be made to the legislation this session. Some of the recommendations are contained in the attached proposed bills. The substance of these debates concerning necessary changes are contained in the minutes of the JLPAC.

Respectively submitted,


Representative Cherie Berry


Senator Bill Martin


Representative Julia Howard


Senator Jim Phillips



GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

H

D

HOUSE DRH3068*-LFZ030(5.14)

Short Title: Welfare Law Corrections.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Howard and Berry

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO MAKE CERTAIN CORRECTIONS TO THE WELFARE LAWS, AS
3 RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
4 COMMISSION. The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:
5 Section 1. (a) G.S. 108A-27.9(a) reads as rewritten:
6 "(a) The Department shall prepare and submit to the Director of the ~~Budget, in~~
7 ~~accordance with the procedures established in G.S. 143-16.1 for federal block grant~~
8 ~~funds, Budget~~ a biennial State Plan that proposes the goals and requirements for the
9 State and the terms of the Work First Program for each fiscal year. Prior to
10 submitting a State Plan to the General Assembly, the Department shall submit the
11 State Plan to the Joint Legislative Public Assistance Commission for its review and
12 then consult with local governments and private sector organizations regarding the
13 design of the State Plan and allow 45 days to receive comments from them."
14 (b) Section 12.20(b) of S.L. 1997-443 reads as rewritten:
15 " (b) The requirement that the Department prepare and submit the State Plan to
16 the General Assembly for approval ~~in accordance with the procedures set forth in~~
17 ~~G.S. 143-16.1 as prescribed in G.S. 108A-27.9(a)~~ shall not be applicable for fiscal year
18 1997-98. Until the counties have prepared their county plans and the State has
19 prepared the State Plan in accordance with this Part and that State Plan has been
20 enacted by the General Assembly and it becomes law, the provisions of the State Plan
21 submitted to the federal government on October 16, 1996, shall remain in effect.
22 State Plans submitted after the 1997-98 fiscal year shall be enacted by the General
23 Assembly and become law in order to be effective."
24
25 Section 2. Section 12.36(a) of S.L. 1997-443 reads as rewritten:

1 Section 12.36. (a) Of the funds appropriated in this act to the Office of
2 State Budget and Management, the sum of five million seventy-five thousand two
3 hundred two dollars (\$5,075,202) for the 1997-98 fiscal year and the sum of three
4 million nine hundred thousand dollars (\$3,900,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year shall
5 be placed in a Restrictive Reserve to Implement Welfare Reform. These funds shall
6 be allocated from the Reserve as follows:

7 (1) \$275,000 for the 1997-98 fiscal year and \$400,000 for the 1998-99
8 fiscal year to support the establishment of a uniform system of
9 public assistance programs as authorized under G.S. 108A-25.1,
10 and to provide counties with workstations for biometric imaging:

11 (2) \$2,500,000 in each fiscal year to fund program integrity activities in
12 each ~~county~~; county. These funds shall be given to the counties in
13 a lump sum and unexpended funds shall revert to the General
14 Fund;

15 (3) \$500,000 for the 1997-98 fiscal year to establish and support an
16 Office of Inspector General in the Department of Justice;

17 (4) \$300,000 in each fiscal year to establish a pilot project in the
18 Department of Labor for creation of Individual Development
19 Accounts;

20 (5) \$1,500,202 for the 1997-98 fiscal year for the following purposes:

21 a. To establish First Stop Employment Assistance in the
22 Department of Commerce;

23 b. To expand the Labor Market Information System in the
24 Employment Security Commission; and

25 c. To assist the Job Service Employer Committees or the
26 Workforce Development Boards in their completion of the
27 study of the working poor.

28 Funds shall not be allocated under this subdivision unless and until
29 the Office of State Budget and Management has certified that
30 federal funds are not available to the Department of Commerce for
31 these purposes; and

32 (6) \$700,000 for the 1998-99 fiscal year for the continued support of
33 the Office of Inspector General in the Department of Justice, and
34 for the First Stop Employment Assistance in the Department of
35 Commerce. These funds shall be allocated by the Office of State
36 Budget and Management on the basis of need."

37 Section 3. This act becomes effective June 30, 1998.

1 or group of recipients whose eligibility for public assistance is dependent on all the
2 other group members' financial and nonfinancial situation, shall be denied
3 assistance."

4 Section 2. Section 12.35 of S.L. 1997-443 reads as rewritten:

5 "Section 12.35. The Department of Health and Human Services shall have the
6 uniform system of recipient identification established in G.S. 108A-25.1 in place and
7 operating ~~before October 1, 1998.~~ as soon as possible after federal approval of the
8 phase-in process. The Department shall implement the start of the phase-in process
9 no later than October 1, 1999. Except as otherwise provided in this Part, this Part is
10 effective when it becomes law.

11 Section 3. Funds appropriated by S.L. 1997-443 to the Department of
12 Health and Human Services and the Office of State Budget and Management for the
13 Biometrics Recipient Identification System for the 1997-98 fiscal year shall not revert
14 but shall remain available to the Department for this purpose.

15 Section 4. Section 3 of this act becomes effective June 30, 1998. The
16 remainder of this act is effective upon becoming law.